The Builder.

No. CCIII.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1846.

NOTHER year has rolled by, and to-day we complete the fourth volume of our journal. It seems as if it were but yesterday that we commenced it, with promises of increased exertions, to render THE BUILDER worthy of the confidence reposed in it by the public, and we can scarcely believe that we have had, since then, fifty-one opportunities to redeem our pledges. But so it is: the preparation of a constantly recurring periodical work, especially if conjoined with other duties, is a sure means of making time fly fast. There is no cessation,—no pause; the task is never done; the mind never unoccupied. "I'll leave it till to-morrow," cannot be said; pleasant loiterings must not be hoped for; it is on, on, on, till the account is closed: and so the years' ends come long before they are looked for. An editor's duties, even in a case comparatively unimportant, are onerous and unthankful: those he praises "love him less than their dinner," and those he finds fault with hate him "worse than the d——l." If he step out manfully, he can scarcely avoid treading now and then on somebody's toes, who will make a point of never forgetting it; while those on whom he may bestow commendation, even if nothing more substantial, during his journey, will quietly place it all to the account of their own merits.

"And suppose they do," say our readers, perhaps, by this time; "what is that to us?" You are quite right: this is nothing to you. The fact is, however, we would gladly establish a friendly understanding with you; and though our province does not exactly include the feelings, should rejoice in believing that we had your kind consideration, and that our motives were rightly appreciated. Lest, however, you should not agree with us in this view of the subject, let us return to our promises of last year, and so to business.

These promises, we venture to think, have been kept faithfully; and we appeal to the volume itself as evidence, and would adduce the greatly increased circulation, and the improved position of THE BUILDER in public esteem, as convincingly confirmatory of the assertion. No expense has been spared to improve the character of the work; the illustrations are far superior to those of any preceding year, and we think it will be admitted that the volume contains a mass of information, not elsewhere attainable, of the utmost value to a large and varied class of readers. We have endeavoured, in as few words as possible, to place before the public the earliest intelligence on all matters within our province, and to offer them sound opinions on all matters in dispute: the circumstance that both our facts and opinions are regularly quoted, by the whole of the metropolitan and provincial press (to the conductors of which our thanks are due, moreover, for expressions of unvarying good will), affords us a gratifying assurance that our endeavours have not been wholly unsuccessful.

Of the engravings, we will not speak further than to say, that amongst the new works illustrated will be found views and details of the sorting-room in the Post Office, St. Martin's-le-grand; the laboratory in University College; the entrance to Kew [illegible]; Fulham church tower; the Middlesex house of detention; All Saints' church, St. John's Wood; St. Mark's church, in Alexandria; the Crescent Chapel schools, in Liverpool; and the University galleries and Taylor Institute, in Oxford.

Our hope is to publish views of all the principal buildings, erected from time to time in England; and we invite architects, builders, and proprietors to give us such information, and to afford us such facilities, as may enable us to do so in the most satisfactory manner.

The year which is opening upon us promises to be more than ordinarily full of matter demanding our attention, and to this we will allude next week; suffice it now to say, that, strengthened by success, we shall enter upon the task with renewed energy, and a strong determination to advance the great objects we have in view.

Before concluding, we may mention, that an index, much fuller even than that which was given last year, has been carefully prepared, and, with the title-page, will be presented *gratuitously* with the next number, so as to render the whole of the information contained in the volume readily available.* A title-page in *colours* has been printed, and may be obtained on application at the office, by those who prefer it to that which accompanies the index.

We have now only to offer our respectful thanks to all who have aided us, and to solicit from them a continuance of their kind offices.

THE SITE FOR THE WELLINGTON STATUE.

A CONTEMPORARY, generally well informed on all points, said last week, "The site of the Wellington Statue is at length determined; and workmen have begun to prepare the foundation for a pedestal less stately, but more appropriate, than the one so earnestly contended for, in the open space west of the Horse Guards, and fronting the inclosure in St. James's-park."

This, however, is not exactly the case: the site is at present undetermined on. Mr. Burton, the architect of the arch, we have reason to believe, was requested to furnish a design for a pedestal, but for obvious reasons declined doing so. Mr. Barry was then applied to, and under his direction, as a preliminary step, some men were set to work to dig a hole, in the parade, simply to ascertain the nature of the ground there, so as to judge of the propriety of adopting that site. The excavation has since been filled in.

That it is the intention of the Government, at this moment, to remove the statue from its present doubly destructive position, we can affirm with tolerable confidence; but it is as certain, that those of the committee who have been instrumental in raising it there, are using all the means in their power to prevent interference with it, and would urge the silence of the public since the matter was stated to be settled, as an evidence of general approval, in order to move the Government from their intention. They reckon on the important businesses which will occupy parliament when it meets, and the occurrence of other events, to occupy the public; and think if they can get the scaffolding down, while good John Bull is enjoying the lull of security, there is good reason to believe it would not be put up again. They may rely, however, on having one watcher, although it be but,

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BUCKINGHAM PALACE.—On Saturday, the demolition of the ornamental colonnade forming the front of the south wing of the palace was commenced, from which point the wing which is to be added begins.

* Covers for the BUILDER may be obtained at the office, price 2s., or the publisher will undertake to bind the numbers at 2s. per volume.

A SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER ON DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE.*

WHILST power was, varyingly, in the hands of the monarch, the church, or the barons, it is perhaps not surprising that political and sanguinary contention should be the chief matter for the records of the time, of which they really formed important elements. The history of the present age will bear a different aspect. But we may well feel curious, as regards other particulars affecting the social condition of our ancestors, not only of the ascendant class, in the retirement of their homes and the tranquillity of peace, but of those where documentary history falls short, including that class which had the condition and the badge of slavery. The future historian of the past must inquire into the history of the habitations and the domestic life of a country, and in this he will derive much assistance from the collections of household expenses, of letters, and other papers, so many of which have lately appeared. But he will still gain a small portion of the requisite matter, unless he make an attentive examination of the domestic architecture, of which examples of all periods remain in most countries; though now, circumstances which appear particularly to affect the present times are rapidly lessening the number, notwithstanding the efforts of many to preserve them.—The study of ecclesiastical architecture has excited a large amount of attention, whilst domestic architecture has scarcely received that which its importance as an exponent of national character and manners, of the social and political state of past centuries, might reasonably demand. The more celebrated examples have, indeed, been well illustrated, and their dates are sufficiently familiar to the comparative few, who have thought domestic equally important with religious edifices; but a similar attentive and prevailing study to that now given to ecclesiastical architecture, which shall not merely determine general dates, but inquire into the influence of national and local customs, and of situations as regards the aspect of the country, the state of parties and the provision for safety, and the nature of available materials, has yet to be undertaken. Many examples, which are now scarcely noticed, from their distance from other residences, would then contribute greatly to the correct delineation of the local history; and we have thought it not an unimportant object of our journal, to seize the opportunity of preserving records of the designs of such as happened to catch our attention. How many really valuable and interesting particulars of history would be open to us, had it in all cases been the practice to preserve merely such representations as we have given during the past year—examples deemed unimportant till they have passed away, and the evidence they could have afforded has been lost. It may, therefore, be a fitting supplement to the volume, if we offer some particulars of the general progress, which may assist in assigning the examples given to their proper place in the chronology of domestic architecture.

It is important to view the examples in each country, with a clear perception of their particular purposes; for these, along with differing manners and materials, would lead to great variety of destination and form, a matter not always made sufficiently obvious. The purposes of the cathedral, the abbey church, the collegiate church, the ordinary parish church, and each other variety of the ecclesiastical structure require to be discriminated; and similar considerations are far more to be recollected, in viewing the examples of domestic architecture, in which also are observable the influence of foreign manners, communicated by intercourse or conquest. Thus the Elizabethan architecture, ordinarily considered to be a union of the Italian and Gothic systems, owed many of its peculiar features to the taste of Flanders, which indeed had exerted a great influence in England, before the Elizabethan, as a defined style, had come into use. The domination of the Spaniards has also left its visible impress upon the character of the architecture in the Netherlands, and the same influence is even apparent in the remote town of Galway, in Ireland, of which some specimens were published in our third volume.

In Mr. Britton's "Architectural Antiquities," examples of domestic architecture are

* In connection with illustrations previously given in this volume.

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